E/045/052

IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
SALT LAKE DISTRICT OFFICE
2370 South 2300 West
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119

3809 (U-027)
U27-89-05P

* Relates to an expansion of exploration project in Clifton area.

CERTIFIED MAIL P917 499 781
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

RECEIVED
SEP 11 1989
DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

DECISION

William Moeller :
American Consolidated Mining Co. :
405 South 100 East, Suite One :
Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062 :

MINING PLAN-OF-OPERATIONS

Your plan-of-operations has been analyzed in the enclosed environmental analysis and is approved subject to the proposed reclamation plan and additional requirements to mitigate environmental consequences identified in the environmental analysis and upon submission of a bond.

A bond in the amount of $6,000 may be submitted in the form of an acceptable corporate surety, personal surety, cash, or negotiable security of the United States. Evidence of current bonding with the Utah Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining covering the subject lands may be submitted in lieu of a bond to the BLM. The bonding requirement must be met within two weeks of receipt of this decision.

Failure to submit the required bond will result in the requirement to begin immediate reclamation. The Notice-of-Noncompliance will be rescinded upon compliance with bonding requirements.

You have the right to appeal to the Utah State Director, Bureau of Land Management, in accordance with 43 CFR 3809.4. If you exercise this right, your appeal, accompanied by a statement of reasons and any arguments you wish to present, which would justify reversal or modification of the decision, must be filed in writing at this office within 30 days after the date of this decision. This decision will remain in effect during appeal unless a written request for a stay is granted.

DEANE H. ZELLER
Deane H. Zeller
District Manager

cc: U-920 w/encl.
Wayne Hedberg, UDOGM w/encl.

# CLIFTON PLAN-OF-OPERATIONS EA

## I. INTRODUCTION

During a field examination of the Clifton Mining District on June 21, 1989, it was observed by Steve Brooks that numerous new roads and trenches had been constructed in T. 8S., R. 17W., Sections 19 and 20. Detailed mapping (Map 1) was done along with land status determinations which identified 2.5 miles of new road on public land having an aggregate disturbance of 7.5 acres. The claimant, American Consolidated Mining, represented by Bill Moeller American Consolidated Mining was contacted along with Wayne Hedberg of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining and a joint field examination conducted on July 5, 1989. During the field examination it was agreed that UDOGM would assume the lead role for permitting disturbances on patented claims adjacent to Clifton and that the BLM would assume the lead role for obtaining a plan for the disturbances on public lands approximately 1.5 miles northeast of Clifton. Since the disturbance on patented lands (about 15 acres) and public lands (7.5 acres) exceeds the 5 acre threshold mandatory bonding is required by UDOGM.

## II. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the no action alternative the area would be left as is, and no reclamation would be required. Since this in contrary to the 43 CFR 3809 regulations the no action alternative will only be considered briefly.

## III. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Since most of the construction has been completed, the proposed action will analyze work done, projected additional disturbance and various possible reclamation and mitigation measures. The operator has proposed 12 drill holes on existing roads using a rubber tired rotary drill rig. The existing roads have a disturbed ground width of 18 feet on flat ground and up to 45 feet on steep slopes. The average width of disturbance is 25 feet. Other disturbances include hillside scrapes. The roads also have a dozer rip to expose rock for sampling.

### A. Affected Environment and Proposed Action.

1. Air Resources. The air quality of the area is good due to limited population and absence of industrial activity.

2. Water Resources. The surface water resources in the area exist as precipitation and intermittent first and second order drainages. Snow accumulation is slight and during melt periods most runoff is a percolation. Additional runoff is produced during uncommon high intensity rainstorms.

3. Soils. Two soil types are present in the prospect area consisting of semi-desert shallow loam supporting a juniper

and big sagebrush community and semi-desert stony loam having a black sagebrush community. Both soil types are mildly erosive.

a. Stony Loam. Characteristic soils in this site are over 150 cm deep and well drained. They formed in alluvium derived mainly from limestone, quartzite, and rhyolite parent materials.

45 to 65 percent of the soil surface is covered by pebbles, cobbles, or stones. Rock fragment content in the particle-size control section is usually 50 percent or more, and always greater than 35 percent. These fragments may be pebbles, cobbles or stones. These soils are coarse textured to moderately fine textured, and may show weak discontinuous cementation by silica or carbonates in some sub-horizon. These soils are usually calcareous to the surface. Reaction is mildly alkaline to very strongly alkaline. Permeability is moderately slow to moderately rapid. Available water capacity is 5 to 15 cm (2 to 6 inches).

The water supply capacity is 5 to 20 cm (2 to 8 inches). Average annual soil loss in potential is approximately 1 ton per acre. The soil surface factor (SSF) in potential is 12.

b. Semi-Desert Shallow Loam. Characteristic soils in this site are 50 to 100 cm deep and well drained. They formed in alluvium, and lacustrine sediments from mixed parent materials.

The soils of this site have moderately fine textures throughout the profile. Generally, these soils have a root restricting zone between 20 and 40 inches. These root restricting zones may be a duripar, a petrocalcic horizon, a strong calcic horizon or bedrock. The soils are moderately calcareous or strongly calcareous throughout, and moderately alkaline or strongly alkaline. Permeability is moderately slow, runoff is medium and the hazard of erosion is slight.

The water supplying capacity is 8 to 23 cm (3 to 9 inches). Average annual soil loss in potential is approximately 5 tons per acre. The soil surface factor (SSF) in potential is 12.

4. Vegetation. Vegetation on steeper rocky slopes consists of sparse juniper, low sage, and bunchgrass. Drainages contain Indian ricegrass, big sagebrush, and basin wildrye.

5. Threatened and Endangered Species. No threatened or endangered plant or animal species are known to occur in the area.

6. Wilderness. The area of proposed action does not lie within or near a wilderness study area.

7. Cultural Resources. No cultural resource surveys have been conducted in the area of proposed action. Therefore, no prehistoric or historic sites have been located or recorded. The area has a moderate probability for containing prehistoric sites because of its location on ridgetops and near pinyon-juniper

forest. Other prehistoric sites have been recorded in the vicinity in similar environmental terrain.

8. Socioeconomic. The general area is accessed from either the Pony Express route to Gold Hill or south of Wendover via alternate Highway 93 to the Ibapah road and to Gold Hill. Dominant uses in the area include grazing, mineral exploration, and hunting. The nearby Deep Creek Mountains receive the majority of recreational visitation.

9. Visual Resources. A visual resource inventory was conducted in 1979 on the Gold Hill Planning Unit. Clifton Flats and the affected area fall under a VRM Class IV. The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. Proposed Action. The existing disturbance plus projected additional work is anticipated to disturb a total of 20 acres. The project activity consists of additional drill road construction and drilling occurring over a period of 2 to 3 years.

1. Air Resources. There will be no significant impact. The small amount of machine exhaust emitted to the atmosphere will have a negligible effect on air quality. There would be a temporary local negative effect on air quality due to dust from traffic over the access road, however, this should be slight due to the coarse grained nature of the soils.

2. Water Resources. Due to the lack of surface runoff, it is anticipated that impacts to water resources would be negligible.

3. Wildlife Resources. For the duration of operation, there will most likely be a temporary displacement of mule deer and chukar to surrounding areas. Following shutdown or reclamation reoccupation should occur. The displacement is facilitated by large amounts of surrounding undeveloped lands.

4. Soils. The soil profile is destroyed along roads during construction. The roads are usually cut to weathered bedrock. Erosion will occur from fill slopes and to a lesser degree from the roadbed, but should be minimal due to low erosion rating.

5. Vegetation. There will be destruction of vegetation in areas of construction. Without replacing the soil material on the weathered bedrock surface of the road, it is expected that revegetation to a diversity and density currently present would not

occur in the foreseeable future. Due to the arid climate, revegetation is difficult and every effort should be made to minimize surface disturbance.

6. Threatened and Endangered Species. No impact.

7. Wilderness. No impact.

8. Cultural Resources. Exact impacts to cultural resources are unknown until an intensive cultural resource survey of the area is conducted. There is a moderate probability, based on the topography, vegetation, and location of other sites in the area, that prehistoric sites are located in this area. If this is the case, these resources would be impacted by the proposed action.

9. Socioeconomic Resources. There will be no significant impact to socioeconomic resources in the area. Personnel involved in the project have been working in the area for many years and no influx of people is anticipated.

10. Visual Resources. Visual scars from construction of roads will detract from the naturalness of the area. Line and color elements will be impacted by carving new roadways into slopes. Class IV allows for considerable impacts as described above.

## V. RECLAMATION AND MITIGATION

A. Proposed Action. Reclamation and mitigation has been identified in the plan-of-operations and will be implemented as areas are identified to be unfavorable for mineral development. American Consolidated has proposed to recontour roads with a backhoe and to seed areas to BLM specifications.

B. Additional Requirements to Mitigate Environmental Consequences.

1. All road locations will be flagged by the operator in the field in order to allow review by the BLM authorized officer's representative and equipment operator prior to construction.

2. Road placement should not occur along the bottom of drainages.

3. Borrowing or scraping material from areas above the road cut is not permitted.

4. An end to end placement of drill truck and water tender will be used and drill pads will be constructed no wider than the access roads.

5. Switchbacks will be constructed with a radius only

large enough to permit backing of equipment.

Upon completion of project work, the following reclamation and restoration will be performed.

All road and drill pads constructed during the project will be recontoured to conform to the natural surrounding terrain. Recontouring will be accomplished by placing the excavated material contained in the fill back into the roadways, and blending the cut and replaced material to a uniform slope without causing additional disturbance or destruction of vegetation. All reclaimed area will be seeded in the fall immediately after dirt work has been completed with a seed mixture to be determined by the authorized officer.

C. No Action. Failure to implement the mitigation and reclamation will result in increased erosion and loss of vegetation from the disturbance to continue into the foreseeable future.

## VI. PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONTACTED

Diana Christensen, Archaeologist
Pat Johnston, Biologist
AJ Martinez, Natural Resource Specialist
Gregg Morgan, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Kezia Snyder, Biologist